

Saving the Polar Bear

A WebQuest for Polar Bear Ecology

Introduction

Polar bears are the world's largest land predators, but they are in trouble. In May 2008, they were listed as a "threatened species" under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Polar bears face multiple challenges to their survival, and many scientists fear they will become extinct if people do not take action. In this WebQuest, you will explore the factors that threaten polar bears' existence, learn what the United States and other countries are doing to protect polar bears, and discover what high school students can do to save the species.

Task

National Geographic Magazine has hired a film crew to make a video. The video will highlight the threats to polar bears, what the United States and other countries are doing to protect polar bears, and what high school students can do to save polar bears. Your teacher will divide your class into small groups. With your group, your task is to research the questions below and then make a video.

Process

Use the resources listed in the Resources section to begin your research. The Web sites listed are good starting points, but further Internet research will be necessary. Record your answers to the following questions. You will use them to make a video at the end of the project.

1. What is the biggest threat facing polar bears?
2. What other factors are harming polar bears?
3. What are the U.S. and other countries doing to protect polar bears?
4. How do scientists learn about polar bears?
5. What can be done to protect polar bears?

Video

Once your group has completed its research, use a video camera to shoot a video that outlines the threats to polar bears, what the United States and other countries are doing to protect polar bears, and what high school students can do to save polar bears. The video should be 5 to 10 minutes long. Your video could be in a documentary or journalistic style or any other filmmaking style that makes sense for the project. Show your video to your class. Include a separate document that provides sources for the facts you use in your video.

Resources

[Polar Bears International](#)

[U.S. Geological Survey](#)

[National Geographic](#)

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)

[National Wildlife Federation](#)

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

Evaluation

Read this rubric to see how you will be scored on this activity.

Criteria					Points
	0	5	10	15	
Task	The task was not completed.	It appears that some effort was made to complete the task, but major ideas are missing.	The task was completed as assigned, but some of the facts presented in the video were not accurate.	The task was completed with great attention to detail and thorough documentation.	
Process	The process was not followed.	The process was followed, but not all of the questions were answered, and a fact-checking document was not completed.	The process was followed, but a fact-checking document was not completed.	It was clear that much research went into the project. A fact-checking document was completed.	
Video	The video was poorly done and not well prepared.	The video included key ideas but lacked general cohesiveness.	The video included almost all key ideas, but it was too short and was not engaging.	The video was engaging and well organized, and it contained all key ideas.	
Total Score					